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Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP82-00457R005300560003-3

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

26 JUL 50

COUNTRY Austria/USSR

DATE DISTR.

SUBJECT USIA-Controlled Glass Factory Requests
Austrian Ministry of Trade to Curtail Austria's
Glass Imports

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE
ACQUIRED 25X1NO. OF ENCLS.
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1. A few weeks ago Austrian Director General Friedrich Lorenz of the USIA-controlled Erste Oesterreichische Maschinglasindustrie A.G. invited officials of the Austrian Ministry of Trade to visit the Brunner Glasfabrik in Brunn am Gebirge on 6 June 1950. Juranek, a former civil servant, who is now employed by the Brunner Glasfabrik as a liaison official to the Austrian Government, extended this invitation in person to Sektionschef Eugen Lanske.* Apparently acting on behalf of Lorenz, Juranek informed the Trade Ministry that the Brunner Glasfabrik is now operating at a loss and may have to curtail its present employment unless it can find a market for large stocks of surplus products which it has accumulated during recent months.
2. Lanske accepted Juranek's invitation and on 6 June 1950 accompanied by Ministerialrat Dr. Emerich Gernert-Mautner-Markhof, the Ministry's glass expert, Sektionsrat Ing. Adolf Vlcek, and Ministerialsekretär Rudolf Szabo went to the Brunner Glasfabrik to confer with Lorenz. Lorenz promptly informed Lanske and his colleagues that the USIA-controlled Brunner Glasfabrik has stopped shipping most of its output to the Soviet Union and is, therefore, very anxious to sell its products on the Austrian market. Lorenz urged Lanske to curtail Austria's glass imports, pointing particularly to the inferior grade of Bulgarian glass which is now on the Austrian market. At the same time he admitted that the Brunner Glasfabrik is having serious difficulty competing with foreign glass manufacturers. He also criticized the Austrian National Bank for withholding the foreign exchange which the Brunner Glasfabrik requires to import a few essential raw materials.
3. Although Lanske promised to refer Lorenz' criticism to Bulgarian commercial authorities, he informed him that Austria must import glass to satisfy its present needs. He told Lorenz that both Italy and Bulgaria had stipulated in their respective trade agreements that Austria import specific quotas of their glass and that the Ministry of Trade had accepted these terms in order to acquire foreign markets for Austrian goods. Finally, Lanske reminded Lorenz that for the past five years the Brunner Glasfabrik has not only refused to cut its prices but, more important, has shipped a majority of its glass to the Soviet Union. Lanske made it clear to Lorenz that these post-war practices of the Brunner Glasfabrik had forced the Austrian Government to turn to foreign markets.**

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Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP82-00457R005300560003-3

Next Review Date: 2008

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25X1A * ☐ Comment: Juranek was released from government service because of his Nazi record.

25X1A ** ☐ Comment: Lanske and his colleagues left the Brunner Glasfabrik feeling that their conference with Lorenz had been completely fruitless. They did not see a Soviet director on the plant premises and are inclined to believe that USIA no longer retains a resident Soviet official at the Brunner Glasfabrik.

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